

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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September 13, 2018

The Honorable Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai,

As we work to close the digital divide, it is critical that we understand where broadband is available and where it is not. In many rural areas, the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) mobile coverage maps and nationwide broadband coverage reports overstate service quality and geography. To address this issue, we encourage you to improve the National Broadband Map by using consumer-reported data to increase the accuracy of the FCC's mobile coverage maps.

The information currently collected by the FCC on broadband coverage is not detailed enough to provide an accurate picture of conditions at the local level, especially in rural areas. Without an improvement in data collection, maps will continue to inaccurately suggest service availability in unserved or underserved areas. Too many consumers have experienced the frustration of seeing an area covered on a map only to find out no service or extremely limited coverage is available on the ground. When coverage maps overstate service, it is often rural consumers that pay the price.

While the FCC is limited in its ability to verify nationwide broadband coverage at the local level, consumers can provide valuable feedback about the actual availability and strength of service in their own communities. By "crowdsourcing" data, the FCC could produce maps that more accurately reflect the real experiences of consumers in the places they live and work. The FCC's Speed Test App allows consumers to take sophisticated measurements about the quality of service in a particular area. This data should be used to ensure maps do not overstate coverage. For example, if a consumer finds that no coverage or limited service exists in an area reported as served, their data should be reflected in the FCC's maps. Consumers—as well as state and municipal agencies—can be our eyes and ears on the ground. As we work on improving the accuracy of our coverage maps, we encourage the FCC to consider this as one method to produce the most accurate maps possible.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

November 27, 2018

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Klobuchar:

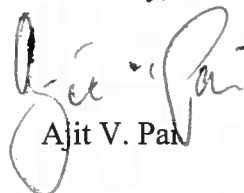
Thank you for your letter about broadband mapping. Closing the digital divide is one of my top priorities. As you know, I grew up in Parsons, Kansas and have traveled during my time at the Commission to locations as varied as Utqiagvik, Alaska, Madelia, Minnesota, and Capon Springs, West Virginia. I have seen with my own eyes what affordable high-speed Internet access can do for a community—for its schools, its libraries, and its hospitals, and for those American communities struggling to stay afloat.

I agree that maintaining updated and accurate broadband deployment data is critical to bridging the digital divide. We need to understand where broadband is available and where it is not in order to target our efforts and limited funding to areas that are most in need. That is why, in an August 2017 *Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, the Commission initiated a proceeding to take a focused look at FCC Form 477—the principal tool used by the Commission to gather data on communications services, including broadband services—to explore how we can revise aspects of the data collection to increase its usefulness to the Commission, Congress, the industry, and the public. Commission staff is carefully reviewing the record in the *Further Notice*, and your letter will be entered into the record and considered as part of the Commission's review.

In your letter, you encourage the Commission to use consumer-reported data to increase the accuracy of the Commission's mobile coverage maps. We continue to look into ways to collect and use accurate data from any source, including consumers themselves, to assemble a reliable map. As you may know, the Commission's Speed Test App is one way consumers can participate in collecting data about broadband deployment, and our staff are examining if it could be leveraged to better understand wireless broadband network performance.

I appreciate your continued interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



Ajit V. Pai



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

November 27, 2018

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senate
172 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Capito:

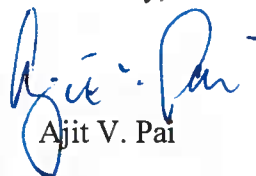
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Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai

Senator, I just wanted to thank you so much for your support over the past two years. On this issue and others, from DC to Capon Springs, you've been a terrific leader on broadband!